

In the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in this application:

1. (Currently amended) An adjustable coupler lock, comprising:
  - a) a lock body, comprising
    - i) a locking mechanism, and
    - ii) a locking plate;
  - b) a shaft having a narrow end, a flange end, and at least two recesses along the length of the shaft;

wherein the shaft is inserted in a first insertion direction or an opposing second insertion direction into one of two openings in the lock body with the coupler lock in a locked position and moved through the lock body ~~in a first direction~~,  
and engagement of the locking plate with one of the shaft recesses does not allow movement of the shaft through the lock body in a ~~second~~ direction opposing the insertion direction unless the locking mechanism is unlocked.
2. (Currently amended) The coupler lock of claim 1, wherein said shaft and said lock body ~~components of the lock~~ are made of stainless steel.
3. (Original) The coupler lock of claim 1, wherein the shaft recesses have a vertical edge nearer the narrow end of the shaft, and a tapered edge nearer the flange end of the shaft.
4. (Original) The coupler lock of claim 1, wherein the shaft is moved through the lock body in the first direction without unlocking the locking mechanism.
5. (Currently amended) An adjustable coupler lock comprising:
  - a lock body;
  - a locking mechanism disposed within said lock body;
  - an adjustable means for securing the lock body to an object, wherein said adjustable means allows the lock body to move in one of two directions relative to said

object ~~a first direction~~ but not in ~~[[a]]~~ an opposing ~~second~~ direction when the coupler lock is in a locked position.

6. (Original) The adjustable coupler lock of claim 5, wherein said adjustable means for securing the lock body to an object comprises a shaft with two or more recesses.

7. (Original) The coupler lock of claim 6, wherein the shaft recesses have a vertical edge and a tapered edge.

8. (Original) The adjustable coupler lock of claim 5, further comprising a cam engagable by said locking mechanism and engagable by a locking plate.

9. (Original) The adjustable coupler lock of claim 8, wherein said cam includes a groove which engages said locking mechanism and a projection which engages said locking plate.

10. (Original) The adjustable coupler lock of claim 9, wherein said locking plate includes a notch which is engaged by said projection on said cam.

11. (Original) The adjustable coupler lock of claim 6, further comprising a locking plate, wherein said locking plate includes an opening through which said shaft is inserted.

12. (Original) The adjustable coupler lock of claim 11, wherein said opening in said locking plate includes a peripheral edge which engages one of said two or more recesses when said coupler lock is in a locked position.

13. (Currently amended) A method of locking a coupler latch comprising the steps of:

placing a coupler in contact with a hitch ball;

closing a coupler latch into a locked position;  
inserting a shaft, which includes two or more recesses thereon, in one of two  
opposing insertion directions through an opening in said latch;  
sliding a lock body over said shaft, wherein said lock body includes a locking  
mechanism and a locking plate;  
inserting said shaft in one of two opposing insertion directions into said lock  
body;  
spring biasing said locking plate in a direction such that the locking plate engages  
said shaft when said ~~lock~~ ~~locking~~ body is slid over said shaft; and  
sliding said lock body towards said latch;  
wherein said locking plate engages said recesses in said shaft and allows  
continued advancement of said lock body toward said latch without unlocking said  
locking mechanism, but does not allow for the lock body to move in a direction opposite  
of the insertion direction ~~latch~~.

14. (Currently amended) The method of claim 13, wherein said shaft is  
inserted through an opening in said locking plate and said locking plate includes a  
peripheral edge that engages one of said two or more recesses ~~when said lock is in a~~  
~~locked position~~.

15. (Original) The adjustable coupler lock of claim 6, further comprising a  
seal located around a portion of the lock body that seals against the shaft.

16. (Original) The adjustable coupler lock of claim 6, further comprising a  
protective coating that is applied on a portion of said shaft.

17. (Original) An adjustable coupler lock comprising:  
a lock body and locking mechanism;  
a shaft with two or more recesses; and  
a locking plate which engages one of said two or more recesses when said coupler  
lock is in a locked position;

wherein said shaft can be inserted through said lock body and said locking plate in two opposing directions.

18. (New) An adjustable length lock for securing a coupler to a hitch ball, the coupler having a coupler latch rotatable from an open position to a closed position, said lock comprising:

a lock body defining an opening therethrough and comprising a locking mechanism and a locking plate; and

a shaft having a narrow end, a flange end, and at least two recesses disposed between said narrow end and said flange end;

wherein said shaft is insertable sequentially through said coupler latch and through said opening from either of two insertion directions with said coupler latch in a closed position and said coupler in contact with said hitch ball, such that engagement of the locking plate with one of the shaft recesses does not allow movement of the shaft through said lock body in an opposing direction relative to the insertion direction unless the locking mechanism is unlocked.

19. (New) The adjustable length lock of claim 18, wherein said shaft and said lock body are made of stainless steel.

20. (New) The adjustable length lock of claim 18, wherein said at least two recesses have a vertical edge nearer the narrow end of the shaft and a tapered edge nearer the flange end of the shaft.

21. (New) The adjustable length lock of claim 18, wherein said shaft is movable through the lock body in the insertion direction without unlocking the locking mechanism.